

Speaker 1: Name: Florence Marie Snyder Fullenwider. Birth date: October 26, 1911. Place born was east Rutherford, New Jersey. Father's full name: Edward Frank Snyder. Father's birth date: October 27, 1880. Father's place of birth: Connecticut. Mother's full name, including maiden name: Florence Bill Davison Snyder. Mother's birth date: September 6, 1882. Mother's place of birth is Alder, Colorado. Siblings name and birth date is Nolan Doris Perry, August 25, 1929. Harold Snyder, deceased, a brother.

[00:01:00]

If you were not born in Salida, Chaffee County when did you migrate here? When I was one year old. Should I go on with that. Where did you live in Salida? I lived in Saguache County, residence now is 605 Teller Street of Salida Colorado. Schools you attended? McFarland School in Villa Grove and Salida High School in 1929.

Speaker 2: That's the year you graduated, right?

Speaker 1: Thank you again for filling this out. I will pick it up when we meet. Sincerely, Lavonne Bonnie Lathrop.

Speaker 2: Lathrop.

Speaker 1: Lathrop.

[00:02:00]

Speaker 2: Then I think you put down some- Okay I see. We can just start elaborating like we were talking about where you went to grade school. When you were there, what were your activities? We'll just go on and then we'll continue into the high school years.

Speaker 1: Well, my grade school was a little country school and there was only a very few of us in it. Maybe 6 or 8 all together. I went there and then my aunt was a teacher there. Then they moved that school house and put it about a mile on the edge of what they call a school section because there was a family moved in with 7 children and he was a carpenter so, they moved the school over there farther so it would be closer to their children. He was a carpenter and they decided to build a new school. They built this new school and used the old one for fire wood. At that time we burnt fuel, wood and coal.

[00:03:00]

Speaker 2: Now how far away was this from your ranch?

Speaker 1: It was a mile. The school we had to walk or we either rode our horses. We just tied them and then rode them to school and then rode them home.

[00:04:00]

Speaker 2: This ranch, that was so interesting. Just tell us about the ranch.

Speaker 1: The ranch? My grandma and grandpa Davison came from Kansas in the 18 something. As they were coming across this desert they saw this beautiful land up in the mountains with a stream through it, and so they rode up there. They

[00:05:00] decided that that's where they were going to stay. That's when- You could homestead land, just 160 by living on it. They homesteaded this 160 and then the man had homesteaded that he didn't prove up on it. You had to live on it and build on it. They took it and the other 160. We still have it. It's 320 acres up in the mountains, with lakes. 2 lakes, the spring creek runs through the property which today makes it very, very valuable. Where it was just a homestead there then.

[00:06:00] The lower place, that was on the west in the mountains. The home place, where they raised cattle and hay now is on the left, it would be the east side, along the Sangre de Cristo range. We have 2000 acres there. It's been pretty bad. It's been drought for 2 years and they haven't raised what they usually raised. We use to raise about 4-500 head of cows, but now they do 60.

Speaker 2: That's quite a drop isn't it.

Speaker 1: That's all that they could raise and they still had to buy hay. I don't know whether it's going to be much better this year. The government has finally come in and reimbursed the ranchers for what they didn't raise so they could keep.
[00:07:00] We still have all that land except 80 acres which we sold and completely paid off the place. It's clear now of debt.

Speaker 2: That's so neat that it stayed in the family.

Speaker 1: It is in the family. My grandparents owned it, my mother and dad when they couldn't keep it, Tom and I, my husband and I came home and we talked about selling it when we got so we couldn't take care of it. Then my kids came and they're still there, but it's getting to the point, they can't take care of it, so their daughter and her husband have come home to keep the land. We still have all but 80 acres of the land in the family yet.

[00:08:00]
Speaker 2: That's amazing isn't it? What are your memories of your childhood? Of course, we hit on the activities at school, and what your chores were at home and things like that.

Speaker 1: Well, we really didn't have much activity in school because there were so few of us. We really maybe played a little. I guess I told you before, I was the youngest. The kids would get me on the pony and make her jump the ditch and I'd fall off and get wet. The teacher would have to make me sit by the wood fire to dry out.

Speaker 2: I bet that was quite an experience.

[00:09:00]
Speaker 1: Well, really later on they just- I remember the time when they just had 2 or 3 children in the school and that's why they consolidated with Villa Grove because it was a bigger school and the kids could go there.

Speaker 2: Did you have chickens and other farm animals?

Speaker 1: We had animals, we had horses, we had cows. My kids have had sheep that they raised just for money for themselves. We had all kinds of animals.

Speaker 2: Then you had them to feed?

Speaker 1: To feed. We had to take care of them.

Speaker 2: Did you have enough chickens to sell eggs?

Speaker 1: Yes.

Speaker 2: Where did you take them to sell?

[00:10:00]
Speaker 1: They come to the ranch and got them. There was a wealthy family there that owned land and he wanted fresh eggs. They would come and buy them at the ranch.

Speaker 2: When do you remember seeing before, about the library in Saguache? Do you remember what you did? Your function there?

Speaker 1: I was a secretary there practically through this lady that was the librarian. In the first place they had it in the school. This was a public library, supposedly. One of our county commissioners was very, very mad when we decided to take it out of the school because it was not a school thing. This is tax payers and suppose to be in, where everybody can use it. We took it out of the school and had a little place down on Main Street in Saguache. There we had it for quite a few years. We have this librarian Ocilla Crowley was her name. She was very, very good. She'd give her life to this library.

[00:11:00]

[00:12:00] This woman and man were very wealthy, the Gotthelfs. They were early settlers in Saguache. The brother was there and he owned the bank and they were very wealthy. They owned a lot of land. This couple didn't have any children and so they decided that since they had no children or really very many relatives, that they would build a new library in Saguache. It was talked over at our meeting, so I was still secretary there. We suggested to her if she was going to have that done, why didn't she do it while she was alive and could see it built the way she would like it. That's what happened. She decided that that would be so much fun. They got designs and everything and this library is there today, which is a beautiful building, and she lived to see it finished. I was still secretary and Ocilla was still the librarian.

[00:13:00]

Speaker 2: How many years were you the secretary?

Speaker 1: It must have been at least 20 or better. I was there from the time it started in

the school and moved to the Main Street until they finished the library. They did have a big thing about it being there for so long and how it was built. I didn't get to go, I didn't feel good, so I didn't get to go to the opening and all that they were doing.

Speaker 2: That's too bad. Sometimes we miss things like that.

Speaker 1: Yeah, when you don't want to.

[00:14:00]

Speaker 2: Exactly. You went to high school there for 4 years. Can you maybe elaborate just a little bit on that? Like where you lived and maybe the activities you did?

Speaker 1: It was very hard for me because I had come from a little school and I wasn't used to a big school. I really didn't do as well as I did, in my grades. I went ahead and finished and graduated. I really wasn't in the activity like I would have had I lived in town because we would go back on the ranch many times on the weekend. I didn't participate too much. I did belong to glee club. I don't know, just really not too much.

[00:15:00]

Speaker 2: Did we decide the high school was the Kesner building?

Speaker 1: The what?

Speaker 2: The Kesner building that you went to, the old building.

Speaker 1: It was the old building. Mm-hmm (affirmative). Did that burn down? I think it did.

Speaker 2: I don't know if it burned down or not. I can't remember. I know I read up about it.

Speaker 1: I can't. Would this be in there if I asked Doris how she might remember this?

Speaker 2: That's okay. We'll just leave it at that for now.

Speaker 1: I think some of that burned if I remember right.

[00:16:00]

Speaker 2: It could have been. Doris, I know we talked about this before. Did the high school burn that Florence went to, or part of it or something? She says yes.

Speaker 1: Yes, I thought it did.

Speaker 2: Oh I see.

Speaker 1: They built this new building.

Speaker 2: Yeah, the newest building. It was so interesting that you lived so many when you married, and what year and all that, if you want to elaborate, did you get married? Then when you started to move around and what your husband did?

Speaker 1: He was a miner. His dad was a miner. That was when the mines run and they mine gold and silver. We were in different places. We were in Idaho Springs, and Silverton, and Telluride, and Arizona. We were in Ash Peak Mine, of course it's all gone now. They had 4 mines in this Ash Peak and he was head of one of them. When we lived there, we were there 2 years and a group of men got caught down in this mine. It caved in. He was in the shop at the time, my husband was. When it caved in there happened to be a, what do you call it, a pipe that didn't mesh and it went down where the men were working and so there was air enough to keep them alive. They took him out of the shop because they knew he had been a miner. He and another man, and they put him on 12 hour shifts, and they never stopped until they got there and all the men were alive.

Speaker 2: They had them dig in?

Speaker 1: They dug that in and they would put water down for them to drink and that way they were alive.

Speaker 2: Isn't that amazing.

Speaker 1: When they got out, I mean, everybody went crazy. We had a big party, and really just whooped up. We were all so thrilled to think that all those men came out alive.

Speaker 2: Isn't that amazing.

[00:19:00]

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: That's really great. Wonderful. We kind of covered where you went to school. I think we hit upon what was Salida like then? This was probably the very edge of town where the high school is?

Speaker 1: It was very much so. I remember like 50 now, all that was on 50 was a filling station. As we'd come into town, Papa would always get his gas and all there. That's about all that was on 50 at that time.

[00:20:00]

Speaker 2: Was what they called the historic section now, was that about all of the businesses that were-

Speaker 1: All the businesses were downtown. There was a big store there that catered to the ranchers and we could sell hay, and we could sell our beef and just everything was there. Our cattle buyers at that time, there was buyers come in

[00:21:00] to the ranch and told what they'd give for the baby calves because they'd sell the baby calves. You kind of tried to keep up on the price because there was no way, too much to keep up, but we'd get papers. We didn't have all this stuff like we do today to keep up on that. With the newspaper you could pretty well keep up on the price. They were Jewish people that bought cattle. Most all of them were Jews. They would Jew, and Jew, and Jew. They would argue and they would finally come to a price. It was wild.

Speaker 2: I bet. Kind of compromise that would have been pretty wild.

Speaker 1: It was. My dad wasn't a rancher but he was very, very intelligent. He had been a chemist and came out here, met my mother and married, and went back there. That's why I was born in the East. He was a reader and he kept on what was going on. He had his head set on what he wanted so there was a real argument. It was almost all Jews that bought this stock.

[00:22:00]

Speaker 2: Do you remember any names? I don't suppose you do? The buyers? I'd be interested to know, but that's okay.

Speaker 1: I can't think of any right now.

Speaker 2: Were you pretty young at that time?

Speaker 1: Yes. All the time I was just grades. I remember a lot of it because that was a big deal.

Speaker 2: Did you purchase your needs in Salida generally? Like flour?

[00:23:00]
Speaker 1: Yes, yes. They made their living by carrying garden stuff into Salida. My grandma and grandpa, you know I told you, they had the wet grass, and they filled this. Grandma made butter, and cheese, and milk, and all kinds of vegetables they raised, and fruit, berries and apples. He would put this wet grass, and bury all this stuff and cover it with grass. That would be practically in the dark and then he would drive into Salida and go from house to house because the grocery stores didn't keep this sort of thing. They didn't have all this stuff, modern. It was just canned stuff they kept and stuff like that.

[00:24:00]
Speaker 2: This was in a horse drawn wagon?

Speaker 1: Yes, oh yes.

Speaker 2: Of course. Interesting. That was really interesting. I enjoyed hearing you because I hadn't heard that.

Speaker 1: They made their living that way for quite a few years and then when the railroad went through, he hacked ties for the railroad because they had ties they put in

and he did that and made quite a bit of money. As he got older he was county commissioner for quite a number of years.

Speaker 2: Now this was your-

Speaker 1: Grandparents on our mother's side.

Speaker 2: The ties were just, he cut down the trees?

[00:25:00]

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative) and they made ties, they called them and buried them in the tracks. There was a huge amount of men working. It wasn't just him.

Speaker 2: Right. There was a lot of timber of course?

Speaker 1: There was lots of timber at that time. It was free.

Speaker 2: On your property. That's interesting. Very interesting, that's great. We covered your memories of Salida and was there anybody that we would kind of say, were they characters? Like people that you might have been acquainted with?

[00:26:00]

Speaker 1: Oh yes, I'm sure there was. The little town of Villa Grove, the railroad went through there. It was a stopping place at that time and so was Alder. There was only about 15 miles between the places. They were both towns. I heard my mother tell a story that this man came in, I guess he was kind of a mean one. He had a gun and he was going to shoot somebody there and start the graveyard. The other men shot him. He was the first to get in the graveyard that they have now.

[00:27:00]

Speaker 2: That's too funny. Is the graveyard still around?

Speaker 1: Oh yes and it's very nice. They've planted trees and it's got a lot of land. The old part isn't used anymore. We just have the new part that's used.

Speaker 2: That's the, to start the graveyard.

Speaker 1: He was going to start a graveyard, but he was the one that got ...

Speaker 2: That's too funny. How many children did you and your husband have?

Speaker 1: I had 3 girls and then I had a boy that died. A baby boy that died. I had all my girls yet.

[00:28:00]

Speaker 2: Where do they live?

Speaker 1: One has a ranch, her and her husband in Saguache. My middle girl has the ranch, our home ranch, her and her husband. The other girl has a business and they go out and assess property. I don't just understand it.

Speaker 2: They're assessors.

Speaker 1: What property is worth. She does a lot of things that I- They had a business of their own, her and another man.

Speaker 2: Do they live around here?

Speaker 1: Yeah, they live here too. They live in Saguache.

Speaker 2: Your family is just kind of all around.

Speaker 1: All together. The ranch has done this. It's kept people together.

Speaker 2: That's great. How many grandchildren do you have?

[00:29:00]

Speaker 1: I have 9 great grandchildren and I have let's see. Sam has 1, Alma had 2, and Donna had 1. I had 4 grandchildren and then one girl adopted 2 and the other girl adopted 1. They have 3 adopted grandchildren, I do.

Speaker 2: Nice, and 9 great grandchildren. That's quite a few.

Speaker 1: I know it, but they all live closely, but they won't be. My oldest great grandchild is graduating this year. She's valedictorian and salut-

Speaker 2: Salutatorian? Where does she live?

Speaker 1: In Saguache.

[00:30:00]

Speaker 2: How big is, population wise?

Speaker 1: I think about 5 or 6 thousand in the town but there is a lot of development all around. All around the mountains are being developed.

Speaker 2: That goes on nowadays. They build up into the mountains. That's-

Speaker 1: That's about it.

Speaker 2: That's about it. Unless you can think of something, a little interesting, little sidelights. If not, that's great.

Speaker 1: I think that's just about done it.

Speaker 2: Okay, that's great.